

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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R 071420Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1973

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL ROUNDUP

REF: LISBON 1243

1. PPD RALLY PEACEFUL:

DESPITE RUMORS OF VIOLENCE, PPD'S MARCH 6 LISBON RALLY (REFTEL) TOOK PLACE PEACEFULLY. TROOPS WERE CONSPICIOUSLY ABSENT, POLICE "PROTECTION" WAS MINIMUM NECESSARY TO CONTROL TRAFFIC. ORDER INSIDE DOWNTOWN HALL (FILLED TO 10,000 PERSON CAPACITY) WAS MAINTAINED BY OVER 400 PHYSICALLY FIT YOUTHS DRAWN FROM PPD AND JSD (PPD'S YOUTH BRANCH), WHO INSPECTED THOSE ENTERING TO DETER HECKLERS AND SMUGGLING OF ARMS. SOME BEARDED YOUNG PEOPLE

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WERE TURNED AWAY. (AS WITH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS FEB 25 RALLY

AT SAME SITE, HIRSUTE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG MALES WERE LIMITED TO LONG HAIR.)

2. PPD ORATORS ATTACK PCP AND PS:

PPD RALLY SPEAKERS ATTACKED ALL OTHER ELECTION COMPETITORS, BUT MOST SEVERE CRITICISM WAS DIRECTED AGAINST COMMUNISTS (PCP) AND SOCIALISTS (PS). ORATORS REFERRED APPROVINGLY TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC EXPERIENCE OF SCANDINAVIA, AND DISPARAGED EAST EUROPEAN POPULAR DEMOCRACIES. STALINIST TRADITIONS OF UNNAMED GROUPS, ACCORDING TO ONE SPEAKER, CONFRONT PORTUGAL NOT WITH A COUP THREAT BUT WITH A CONTINUING STATE OF COUP. PS WAS ACCUSED OF ATTEMPTING TO FOLLOW MARXIST PATH INTERNALLY, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ONE ABROAD; ON ONE HADN PS DENOUNCES DICTATORSHIP OF PROLETARIAT, ON OTHER IT SAYS SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND REFORMIST SOLUTIONS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR PORTUGAL. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS DISMISSED WITH PROTEST THAT CHRISTIANITY IS MONOPOLY OF NO PARTY.

3. PS ATTACKS PRICE INCREASES:

OPORTO SOCIALIST UNIT HAS DENOUNCED GALLOPING PACE OF PRICE INCREASES (SUGAR, ELECTRICITY, CODFISH WENT UP RECENTLY, SUGAR NEARLY DOUBLING IN PRICE). OPORTO UNIT'S STATEMENT FOLLOWS ON HEALS OF HOUSEWIVES' PROTEST IN THAT CITY, IN WHICH SLOGANS CALLING FOR RETURN OF CAETANO WERE ALLEGEDLY CHANGED.

4. ELECTION COMMISSION DISCIPLINE:

MARCH 6 DECREE ISSUING FROM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS ENLARGED POWERS OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMISSION OVERSEEING ELECTION PROCESS, ENABLING HIM TO EXPEL ANY COMMISSION MEMBER WHOSE CONDUCT (SUCH AS IDEOLOGICAL ATTACKS ON FELLOW MEMBERS) INTERFERES WITH THAT BODY'S WORK. DISCIPLINED MEMBER MAY APPEAL EXPULSION ORDER TO NATIONAL SALVATION JUNTA BUT, IN MEANTIME, STAYS EXPELLED. THE DECREE HAS PROVOKED OPPOSITION FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS REPRESENTING FAR LEFT PARTIES, AGAINST WHOM DECREE ORDER CLEARLY IS DIRECTED. IN SEPARATE ACTION, COMMISSION HAS DETERMINED THAT ITS REPRESENTATIVES IN COUNTRY'S ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ARE TO BE CONSTITUTED BY ONE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT MEMBER AND ONE JUDGE.

5. STATUS OF ELECTORAL LISTS:

ONLY A FEW OF CANDIDATE LISTS PRESENTED BY 15 PARTIES IN ALL OR SOME OF PORTUGAL'S 22 ELECTORAL DISTRICTS (REFTEL) ARE FREE OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IRREGULARITIES. PCP LIST WAS ONLY ONE IN LISBON TO MEET ALL STANDARDS SET BY LAW. SEVERAL FAR LEFT PARTIES RISK HAVING LISTS REJECTED IN ONE OR MORE DISTRICTS FOR FAILING TO IDENTIFY THEIR CANDIDATES PROPERLY, FAILING TO PRESENT SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF CANDIDATES, NOT IDENTIFYING PARTY OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARATION OF LISTS, ETC. MRPP INCLUDES AT LEAST THREE SOLDIERS ON ACTIVE DUTY ON ITS LISTS; SOLDIERS MUST HAVE PERMISSION OF THEIR SUPERIORS, MAKING FORCED ALTERATION OR REJECTION OF MRPP

LISTS VIRTUALLY CERTAINTY.

6. PCP SAYS PPD THREATENED ITS MILITANTS:

PCP HAS COMPLAINED ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS OF HARASSMENT, FOCUSING
ITS CHARGES MOST RECENTLY ON PPD. LATEST CHARGE IS THAT ON
MARCH 5 PPD MILITANTS TORE DOWN PCP WALL POSTERS (OR COVERED THEM
UP WITH PPD ONES); WHEN PCP MEMBERS OBJECTED, PPD MILITANTS
ALLEGEDLY PULLED GUNS AND THREATENED THEM.

7. PCP MAY SEEK ELIMINATE MRPP FROM ELECTION:

EMBASSY SOURCE, CONSIDERED RELIABLE, HAS ALLEGED THAT PCP PLANS
(MANNER NOT DESCRIBED) TO MOVE AGAINST MRPP IN NEXT FEW DAYS.
PCP'S AIM IS TO PROMPT GOVERNMENT BAN OR SIMILAR ACTION
AGAINST MRPP.
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